Road safety is a major issue in Queensland and since a record low of 249 fatalities in 2010, the road toll has been steadily increasing. Tragically, people are killed or seriously injured on our roads everyday.

This has devastating impacts on individuals and their families, friends and the community. This is why the Queensland Government remains committed to making roads safer and reducing injuries and fatalities on our roads.

It’s time for action on road safety

The Queensland Road Safety Action Plan has been developed over the past 12 months with more than 60 action items to tackle Queensland’s rising road toll.

The $350 million, two year plan targets improvements to infrastructure, speed management, vehicle safety, road users and the community.

It includes:
- $2 million for a community road safety fund for local education and awareness
- $1.6 million to expand an alcohol and risk-related trauma injury awareness program
- $480,000 to educate students of the risks involved with vehicles
- $82 million a year to fast-track road safety engineering treatments
- a review of speed limits on up to 100 Queensland roads
- the on going roll out of flashing light signs at 300 schools
- a $19.8 million three year campaign to change driver behaviour
- reforms to licensing for younger and older drivers, and motorcyclists.
Foreword

The Queensland Government has undertaken a 12 month review of road safety, from an examination of our most vulnerable road users (including older drivers and motorcyclists) to an assessment of Queensland’s busiest highway with the release of the 2012 Bruce Highway Action Plan.

It is now time for action. This action plan sets out what the government will do over the course of the next two years to work towards achieving a safe road transport system. It addresses the areas of the road network that have the greatest potential to reduce the number of casualties on our roads. These include targeted improvements to road and roadside infrastructure, educating road users to make safe on-road decisions and comply with existing laws, encouraging people to purchase the safest vehicle in their price range and maintaining a strong speed management program. A mix of actions from these areas will be used to make the greatest gains.

The Camera Detected Offence Program plays an important role in the overall approach to improving road safety in Queensland by funding essential road safety initiatives. The program is used to improve road safety by upgrading or enhancing road infrastructure at high risk locations, providing blood products to road trauma victims and public education in key areas targeting the Fatal Five - speeding, distraction and inattention, drink and drug driving, failure to wear a seatbelt and driver fatigue.

Queensland cannot afford to be complacent when it comes to road safety. All of us – government, business and the community – must play our part. There is no doubt that engaging the community is critical to changing attitudes and behaviour and ultimately improving safety on our roads. This is why the government is working on a new and innovative approach to strengthen and refocus the perception of road safety in the community and influence the role individuals play in reducing the road toll.

A national target has been set to reduce the annual number of fatalities and serious injuries by at least 30% by 2020. The actions contained in the plan are aimed at contributing to the target, and fulfilling Queensland’s commitment to the global Decade of Action for Road Safety.

The action plan details the initiatives and projects that will be developed and implemented to provide a safer road transport system over the next two years. The initiatives fall under several pillars: roads and roadsides, speeds, vehicles, road users and community partnerships.

The Queensland Government is committed to working with the community to stop the deaths and serious injuries that occur on our roads.

Together we can make a difference.

Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Jack Dempsey MP
Minister for Police and Community Safety

Neil Scales
Director-General
Department of Transport and Main Roads

Ian Stewart
Commissioner
Queensland Police Service
The Queensland road toll dropped to a record low of 249 deaths in 2010. However, there has been no consistent downward trend over the last decade, and since this record low, the road toll has started to increase. There has also been little change to the number of people hospitalised (approximately 6500 people) as a result of crashes each year.

Roads and roadsides

Figure 1 shows that the majority of serious casualties (that is, fatalities and hospitalisations) between 2008–2012 resulted from the following three types of crashes:

Intersection crashes: 9394 serious casualties occurred at intersections. Intersections involve different types of road users (including motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists) moving in conflicting directions which can present a crash risk.

Head-on crashes: 2512 serious casualties were as a result of head-on crashes. The level of risk of a head-on crash is much higher when vehicles are travelling at high speeds, in opposite directions on two-way undivided roads, which is often the case in rural and remote areas.

Run-off-the-road crashes: 10,233 serious casualties were as a result of run-off-the-road crashes. A run-off-the-road crash occurs when a vehicle leaves the road and collides with a roadside object such as a tree or a pole.

Note: the other category is made up of many crash types including overtaking in the same direction, hitting parked vehicles, hitting railway trains and hitting pedestrians.

This action plan aims to influence a substantial number of crashes by targeting infrastructure treatments for these types of crashes.

Serious casualties by speed zone

Between 2008 and 2012, there were 2176 serious casualties in road crashes involving speeding drivers and riders. The incidence of speeding and speed related crashes was a particular problem in 60km speed zones. Figure 2 shows the number of serious casualties by speed zone during 2008–2012. The largest proportion of serious casualties occurred in 60km/h speed zones (44.5%).

Table 1: Number of fatalities and hospitalisations between 2008 and 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of fatalities</th>
<th>Number of hospitalisations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>6838</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>6328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Serious casualties as a result of crashes by crash type, 2008–2012.

Figure 2: Serious casualties as a result of crashes by speed zone, 2008–2012.
Serious casualties by age

An analysis of serious casualties by age (Figure 3) shows that 4.7% were aged 75 years and over, while comprising 5.5% of the population, and children aged 0 to 16 years comprised 8.1% of the serious casualty tally, although making up 22.7% of Queensland’s population. This implies that children and older road users are not overrepresented when compared on a per head of population basis. By way of comparison, Queenslanders aged 17–24 comprise 11.4% of the state’s population, however constitute 24.5% of all serious casualties.

A number of actions in the plan target Queensland’s young and novice drivers.

Serious casualties by behaviour

A small group of drivers have been shown to be at higher risk of being involved in a crash because of the choices they make. These include motorists who drive with high blood/breath alcohol concentration levels, those who frequently drive at inappropriate speeds and those who drive when tired or not wearing a seatbelt.

Getting behind the wheel while impaired by alcohol is among the most dangerous of on-road behaviours. Between 2008 and 2012, there were 3625 serious casualties as a result of drink driving/riding crashes. Dangerous behaviours, such as speeding and driving while fatigued or distracted, not only puts your life at risk, but endangers the lives of others. The government will continue to target high risk behaviours to improve the safety of our roads.

Serious casualties by road user type

Vulnerable road users (motorcyclists, pedestrians and cyclists) comprised 25.4% of all serious casualties during the period 2008 – 2012 (Figure 5). Motorcyclists and their passengers comprise over half of vulnerable road user serious casualties. Unsurprisingly, over half of all serious casualties were drivers, and 20.3% were passengers.

Figure 3: Serious casualties as a result of crashes by age group, 2008 to 2012.

Figure 4: Serious casualties as a result of crashes by high risk behaviour, 2008 to 2012.

Figure 5: Serious casualties as a result of crashes by road user type, 2008 to 2012.
Roads and roadsides

Road and roadside infrastructure can influence both the risk of a crash and its severity.

Infrastructure improvements can influence crash outcomes in two ways. Firstly, general investment in roads improves the overall quality of the road network, resulting in indirect safety benefits. Secondly, expenditure on safety-focused improvements such as shoulder sealing, median barriers and intersection treatments directly reduce road trauma by creating infrastructure that is more forgiving of human error.

In 2013–14, over $3.9 billion will be invested on Queensland’s roads, including funding towards targeted safety improvements. The Safer Roads Sooner program prioritises road improvement projects in high crash risk locations to gain the greatest road safety benefits. The program is primarily funded from the Queensland Camera Detected Offence Program.

Priority actions

- Increase funds allocated to the Safer Roads Sooner program to $82 million per year, to fast-track engineering treatments at higher risk sites on the state-controlled road network. Treatments will comprise high-benefit, low-cost safety improvement projects targeting serious crash types, including head-on, run-off-the-road and crashes on high speed roads. Projects will include:
  - installing wide centreline road markings including Audio Tactile Line Marking to reduce the likelihood of head-on crashes
  - clearing roadside edges, installing safety barriers and sealing shoulders, prioritised on a crash history basis to reduce the likelihood of run-off-the-road crashes
  - painting right turn lanes, installing right turn arrows at signalised intersections, installing pedestrian facilities and improving skid resistance at intersections
  - implementing engineering treatments that reduce the crash risk and severity for motorcyclists by targeting popular routes that have high crash rates
  - $2 million per year to introduce cycle safety treatments at higher risk locations including line markings to reduce the potential for vehicle and bicycle conflicts.

- Complete the Vehicle Activated Signs Mass Action Program ($600,000 in 2013–14). Under this program, electronic signs activated by vehicle speeds will be installed:
  - to encourage better speed compliance on the approaches to intersections with poor safety performance, and in advance of hazardous curves
  - as interim treatments to locations with a high crash risk, prior to more significant works being designed and implemented.

- Identify and trial innovative safety engineering treatments to further increase visibility of road markings in heavy rain.

- Upgrade Queensland’s state-controlled motorways including the Western Freeway and Pacific Motorway. Upgrades will include the installation of dynamic message signs and variable speed limits to improve incident detection and ease congestion.

- Provide $40 million per year to local governments through the Roads Alliance partnership between the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Local Government Association of Queensland to improve local government roads.

- Invest $10 million in 2013–14 towards Roadside Rest Areas to encourage improved fatigue management amongst motorists and heavy vehicle drivers.

- Invest $20 million over 2013–15 towards the ongoing expansion of the south-east Queensland regional cycle network through Cycle Network Local Government Grants.
Speed management is essential to reducing road deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

Speed increases the risk of a crash occurring by lengthening stopping distances, increasing the risk of losing control on curves or during emergency manoeuvres, and decreasing vehicle stability. It also increases the severity of a crash by intensifying the physical forces of the impact.

The Camera Detected Offence Program is a joint partnership between the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It includes mobile speed cameras, fixed speed cameras, red light cameras, combined red light/speed cameras and point-to-point speed camera systems. The Camera Detected Offence Program has a proven record in reducing Queensland’s road toll.

Priority actions

- Increase the mobile speed camera enforcement program deployment hours to at least 90,000 per year.
- Undertake a statewide speed limit review, to assess current speed limit setting processes and review up to 100 nominated roads. As part of this process, seek public nominations as to which roads are included as part of the review.
- Investigate the upgrade of several existing red light camera locations to include speed detection capability, to reduce speeding through intersections and the severity of crashes.
- Undertake the following actions to ensure that the speed camera program continues to reduce the number of crashes on Queensland roads:
  - review the scheduling method for mobile speed cameras to maximise the general deterrence of speeding and reduce road casualties
  - undertake an annual statewide speed survey to measure general vehicle speeds on Queensland roads
  - complete an annual review of program efficiency and effectiveness to ensure the program continues to focus on reducing road casualties
  - upgrade existing wet film mobile speed cameras and fixed camera locations to digital technology to enhance reliability by 2015.
- Trial innovative practices at roadwork sites, including traffic control devices and signage, to reduce the speed of vehicles entering roadwork sites.
- Work with traffic control companies to encourage compliance with the installation of signs and traffic control devices at roadwork sites, and to ensure that roadwork signage is removed or appropriately covered when works are not in progress.
- Collaborate with the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland and industry on a large scale research project to identify best practice strategies to reduce speeds in roadwork sites.
Vehicles

Vehicle safety features can help prevent crashes from occurring in the first instance, and help to reduce the severity of injuries in the event of a crash to both vehicle occupants and other road users involved, including pedestrians.

The range of safety features on new vehicles increases each year. There are clear safety benefits to be realised from a young vehicle fleet, as research has shown that the rate of serious and fatal crashes increase with age of the vehicle.

The average age of vehicles on Queensland roads has remained relatively static over recent years, at approximately 9.7 years. Reducing the age of Queensland’s vehicle fleet will be important in reducing the number of serious casualties on our roads.

Priority actions

- Continue to support and participate in the Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) to give Queenslanders the latest information on the safety features of new cars such as crash avoidance technology and autonomous emergency braking.

  The ANCAP program:
  - awards a star rating from 1 to 5 for each vehicle following independent crash tests by specialist laboratories
  - provides consumers with information about the availability of safety features and vehicle performance that go beyond regulatory requirements
  - provides the automotive industry with guidance on future ANCAP requirements to assist with the design and specification of new models.

- Continue to encourage car buyers (particularly young drivers and their parents) to consider the safety of a vehicle based on independent information about used cars on the Australian market through the Used Car Safety Ratings (UCSR).

- Implement a public communications strategy to further increase consumer demand for vehicle safety by:
  - promoting the benefits of safety features in new and used vehicles
  - raising public awareness of the ANCAP star rating system and promoting the latest ANCAP crash test results on the Transport and Main Roads website
  - improving availability and accessibility of consumer information about used vehicle safety
  - promoting advancements in vehicle safety technologies aimed at enhancing stability, traction and braking of motorcycles.

- Develop industry partnerships to communicate the importance of fleet safety and improve the uptake of safer vehicles in Queensland’s commercial fleet.

- Improve the uptake of used cars with enhanced safety features in Queensland by maintaining mandatory minimum safety specifications for all new passenger and light commercial vehicles in the government fleet.

- Promote safe vehicle information to the business community to curb work-related crashes, which are a significant part of the road toll and account for a high proportion of all work-related deaths and injuries.

- Review patterns of older vehicle occupant injury and vehicle crash test results to investigate vehicle safety features that benefit older drivers and passengers.

- Use the outcomes of this research to provide older drivers with information to encourage them to consider specific safety features when buying a car, such as head-protecting airbags and features that make driving safer, easier and more comfortable.
A safe road transport system requires alert road users who follow the rules of the road.

Many behaviours increase the risk of a serious crash, including speeding, driving or riding while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, driving or riding while fatigued or distracted and travelling without a seatbelt.

While progress has been made in influencing driver behaviour on Queensland roads, there are still a number of key priority areas that require addressing in order to further reduce road trauma. These include licensing reforms aimed at protecting our most vulnerable road users (including novice drivers, older road users and motorcyclists), enforcement to target dangerous behaviours including the Fatal Five and tackling road safety at the grassroots level through the coordination of programs such as Driver Reviver and the School Crossing Supervisor Scheme.

Priority actions

- Implement a range of licensing reforms including:
  - redesign the Q-SAFE licensing assessment to ensure that novice drivers’ experience and ability to safely manage diverse road environments and risks are adequately tested
  - develop and implement an enhanced motorcycle rider knowledge test
  - formalise the current elective competency-based training and assessment program as the primary motorcycle licensing practical test
  - enhance Queensland’s Graduated Licensing System for motorcyclists to help novice riders develop critical riding skills under safe conditions.
- Implement the recommendations included in the Older Driver Safety Advisory Committee Report (2012) including:
  - introduce a maximum 12 month medical certificate requirement for drivers aged 75 and over
  - develop public education resources, including a handbook and communication activities to target older drivers, their friends, family and medical practitioners to help them make safe decisions about their mobility.
- Continue to install flashing light signs at school zones as part of the government’s $10 million commitment to roll out flashing lights to more than 300 schools over four years (2012–16).
- Review the outcomes of the evaluation of Queensland’s Graduated Licensing System and develop options for further enhancements.
- Develop a framework to evaluate Queensland’s alcohol ignition interlock program and commence data collection for the evaluation.
- Implement stronger vehicle impoundment provisions for high risk offenders.
- Investigate and consider best practice drink driving education programs for first-time low-level drink driving offenders.
- Investigate short-term interventions including immediate licence and registration suspensions for high risk offences such as distracted driving (e.g. using a mobile phone while driving) and non-restraint use.
- Undertake analysis of drug test results to gain improved insight on drug involvement in crashes to assist in future policy development.
- Promote the benefits of refresher courses for motorcycle riders who return to riding after a break.
- Support learner driver mentor programs that help learner drivers who don't have a supervising driver or vehicle to gain the driving experience they need to apply for a P1 licence.
- Trial a program to assist drivers in remote indigenous communities to obtain a licence. This includes a new learning resource to help reinforce key road rules and safe driving concepts.
- Implement a new national heavy vehicle electronic work diary and enhanced advanced fatigue management regulations.
- Review chain of responsibility legislation to strengthen requirements for all parties in the transport chain to reduce heavy vehicle speeding, fatigue and mass non-compliance.
- Trial innovative and cost-effective level crossing safety technologies to improve driver behaviour at rail level crossings.
- Undertake public education activities focussing on the effects of distracting technologies such as mobile phones, headphones and portable devices.
- Partner with the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland to conduct further evaluation of the ‘Three Steps to Safer Riding’ program.
Priority actions

- Provide over $6 million per year from the Camera Detected Offence Program to deliver a three year social change strategy to improve transport safety in Queensland. This will include:
  - developing social marketing campaigns and strategies to target high risk behaviours and key risk groups such as young drivers
  - engaging and building partnerships with the community, industry, business and other stakeholders to encourage involvement, ownership and dialogue about road safety issues.
- Conduct an annual community road safety perceptions and attitudes survey to identify community attitudes to major road safety issues and identify any significant changes in attitudes, perceptions and behaviour compared with previous years.
- Invest $2 million per year from the Camera Detected Offence Program to establish a community road safety fund to allow community groups to apply for funding to assist with the operation of their local road safety education and awareness programs and road crash injury rehabilitation programs.
- Provide $4.5 million per year from the Camera Detected Offence Program to Queensland Health to support the purchase of blood and blood products used in the treatment of victims of road trauma.
- Provide $1.62 million from the Camera Detected Offence Program over three years and work in partnership with Queensland Health and RACQ to expand the Prevent Alcohol and Risk-related Trauma in Youth (PARTY) injury awareness program.
- Provide $480,000 from the Camera Detected Offence Program over three years to expand RACQ’s Docudrama Program across the state, to educate Queensland senior high school students about the potential risks of travelling in a vehicle as both drivers and passengers.
- Encourage community involvement to contribute to road safety, including the promotion of existing mechanisms (e.g. promoting the 13HOON hotline to report drivers performing dangerous, reckless or anti-social behaviour on our roads).
- Deliver national heavy vehicle safety campaigns coordinated across all Australian states and territories by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.
- Work in partnership with industry stakeholders to develop an action plan to improve heavy vehicle safety.
- Make crash data more available to Queenslanders through the implementation of a flexible and contemporary road traffic crash reporting system.
- Work with local governments to increase their focus on road safety and assist them to develop local strategies and action plans.
- Provide active support for the Driver Reviver Program at rest stops throughout the state, to promote safe driving habits among for long distance drivers and help motorists arrive safely at their destinations.
- Build and enhance Queensland’s available road safety knowledge base by undertaking research to support policy development. In 2013/14, the program will include investigation of:
  - potential incentives for safe driving
  - current driver education and training trends and evidence of effectiveness
  - crashes involving young drivers
  - best practice guidelines for learner driver mentor programs
  - driving at unsafe headway distances and tailgating, to develop possible enforcement activity to reduce the number of rear-end crashes.
- Lead and participate in a range of Austroads projects such as an investigation of options for rehabilitation in alcohol interlock programs, a review of blood/breath alcohol concentration limits, and road safety in disadvantaged groups.

There are two main components involved in enhancing the impact of the actions outlined in this plan and building Queensland’s capacity over the long term: community ownership and engagement, and research, data and evaluation.